

February 13, 1938

TRUE READING
CODE GRAY
DECODED BY AAM

AMEMBASSY

NANKING

February 12, 2, p. m.

I repeat for your information following telegram from the Department as well as Tokyo's 75 February 4, 12, noon and Department's 33 February 2, 5, p. m. to Tokyo: from the Department " 59 February 7, 6, p. m. Tokyo's 75 February 4, 12, noon which was repeated to Shanghai.

Please instruct circular instructions to endeavor to furnish the Embassy at Tokyo with the specific data mentioned in the last paragraph of Tokyo's telegram under reference.

In this connection the Department has informed Tokyo as follows: "

" The Department approves of the supplementary oral representations made by you.

The Department is asking the Embassy at Hankow to endeavor to furnish you with the specific data mentioned in the last paragraph of your telegram under reference.

The Department considers that there should be kept in mind the distinction between representations of a general character such as those to which your telegram under reference refers, and which seek observance of principles covering the two points enumerated in the Department's #26 of February 2, 5, p. m. and reports that deal with the concrete settlement of specific cases. As some of the evidence which you may have occasion to present to the Foreign Office in support of your general representations may also be concerned with that for which a local settlement is being sought between contracting parties the presentation of which to the Japanese Government for main settlement must await investigation and examination, it is believed that you should make this point clear to the Foreign Office in order to avoid possible misunderstanding. HULL" From Tokyo "75 February 4, 12, noon Department's 33 February 2, 5, p. m. looting of American property by Japanese forces in China.

(one) I handed a formal note to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at nine o'clock this morning reviewing the reports of depredations and presenting the substance of the final paragraph of the Department's instructions.

(two) Having received from the Department no comment on my supplementary oral representations made to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (17) our 34 January 17, 1p.m. encroach I assume that they were not disapproved and I therefore took an equally strong attitude in my talk with Hirota today. I told him that the data which I was now presenting in our note effectually disproved the reports which had come to me from Japanese sources that we were depending upon Chinese information for our information and I said that we were now giving certain precise dates on which looting had been observed by American Citizens. I spoke of the steady mounting evidence of Japanese depredations which was coming before the American public; that the inflammable effect of this evidence should not be overlooked or minimized and that the patience of the American people was not inexhaustible. I said to the Minister once again in strong terms that I was becoming increasingly disturbed at the situation and the future outlook for Japanese American relations. I asked the Minister for a precise statement which might convey to my Government in reply to its assumptions and expectations of assurances.

(three) The Minister said that the strictest possible instructions had gone out from General Headquarters to be handed down to all Commanders in China to the effect that these depredations must cease and that Major General Homma had been sent to Nanking to investigate and to ensure compliance. Hirota said that he confidentially expects the immediate cessation of such looting. He furthermore authorized me to inform you that in the light of the investigations now being carried out full indemnification will be made for losses and damages inflicted.

(four) With regard to reports of the desecration of the American flag detailed account said that the Japanese Authorities had as yet been unable to confirm these reports.

I trust that the Department will arrange that I be furnished with specific data preferably supported by affidavits from American citizens. In this connection please see my 16 January 10, 10. a. m. paragraph number two "Department's 33 to Tokyo "Following is the Department's telegram number 33 February 2, 5, p. m. to me " With reference to Shanghai's 142 of January 26, 3, p. m. reporting looting of American property at Soochow and Hangchow the Department transmits for your information the following telegram received from W. G. Cram General Secretary Board of Missions M. E. Church South: " Bishop Arthur J. Moore in charge missions of Methodist Episcopal South in China cable from Shanghai that he has visited Soochow where we have large holdings including Soochow University and Laura Haygood School for girls. He reports all buildings looted four buildings bombed Japanese occupying others using new chapel of Laura Haygood as horse stable. He has protested to American Consul Shanghai and advises we make representation to you. I respectfully request you take such action as you deem advisable and effective".

These two telegrams are merely illustrative of the numerous complaints that are being received by the Department of the utter disregard shown by Japanese armed forces for American property in China.

Department desires that you address a formal note to the Foreign Office as under instructions from your government calling attention to these numerous incidents as illustrated by these and other reports which have been sent to you and stating that your government finds it impossible to reconcile these lawless acts directed against American Missionary properties with the assurances repeatedly given by the Japanese Government that American property and interests in China will be in the future respected by the armed forces of the Japanese Government; that it appears that these incidents have occurred with the knowledge and some indeed in the presence of Japanese officials while others such as the occupancy of mission properties by Japanese troops were presumably by the express direction of Military officers; that; that arbitrary entry and occupation together with pilfering looting and wanton destruction of property can in no sense be regarded as acts of a character to be expected from a properly controlled military organization; that _____ assumes that the Japanese Government in no wise approves or condones such lawlessness and expects assurances from the Japanese Government (one) that it will take immediate and specific steps to put an end to the depredations of American properties and (two) that it will make full and complete indemnification for all losses and damages inflicted HULL" GREW"

Please be guided by instructions contained in the Department's telegram 59 February 7, 6, p. m. in providing Tokyo with specific data mentioned in its 75 February 4, 12, noon

JOHNSON

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AAM